

In your post this week, please consider the ethical implications of AI and how libraries should participate in this emerging technology. Do you think the growth of AI is helpful or hurtful? How can libraries contribute to the development of AI technology? Should libraries and other cultural heritage institutions contribute their data/metadata to training sets for commercially-developed AI products? Why or why not?

In the article discussing ChatGPT, Lund and Wang describe how the technology works and provide many pros and cons to using this technology. ChatGPT seems useful for simple library questions like what are your hours, or how do I place a book on hold. At my library system, we have a reference chat system called Mosio. We do not use any AI or GPT models, that I am aware of, but they may be helpful to answer these common, simple queries. Some downsides of using this technology are that it may be unreliable and it may discover information that should only be kept by the institution, such as patron's identifying information. It may be difficult for librarians to determine where the technology collects information, and what it does with the information collected.

AI could also help library catalogs by understanding natural language searches and providing more accurate results. This could be really helpful since sometimes items can be hard to find based on their titles. There is potential with using AI for searching for people to find resources they may not have been able to find previously, as well as find items that they do not remember the title or author for. At my library, we get people who come in asking for a book that someone recommended to them, but all they remember about the book is the subject or a summary. If AI can effectively contribute to user searches, that can make a big difference for these patrons.

The other readings for the week discuss issues found with using AI such as bias, breaches in privacy, copyright problems, and more. This is where we must be very careful in using AI. AI is a very real part of our current world and will only become more prevalent, meaning many of us will need to interact with AI at some point. Users cannot change the issues present in AI because they did not create the technology. Since this is the reality, I think it is important for librarians, and frankly, everyone else using AI, to be cognizant of the potential problems we may face.

References

Lund, Brady D. and Ting Wang. "Chatting about ChatGPT: how may AI and GPT impact academia and libraries?" *Library Hi Tech News*, number 3 (2023). <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/LHTN-01-2023-0009/full/pdf>

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Vincent, J. (2022, November 15). *The scary truth about AI copyright is nobody knows what will happen next*. The Verge. <https://www.theverge.com/23444685/generative-ai-copyright-infringement-legal-fair-use-training-data>